



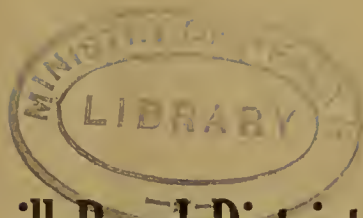
Alston-with-Garrigill Rural District Council

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

for 1925.



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TO THE ALSTON-WITH-GARRIGILL RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my Annual Report as to the health and sanitary conditions of your area during the year 1925.

There are two reasons why this report has been delayed in preparation :—

- (1). The report had to be a survey report reviewing sanitary conditions and progress during the previous five years. There were no annual reports in existence for those years and no records to help me.
- (2). I was only your Medical Officer of Health during the last six months of the year 1925, and this, combined with the previous reason, made it almost an impossibility to prepare a satisfactory report.

Yours faithfully,

J. ARNOLD STOBBS, M.B., B.S.,
Medical Officer of Health.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE ALSTON-WITH-GARRIGILL RURAL AREA.

NATURAL, AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area.—36,971 Acres.

Population—Census, 1921 : 3,346.

Estimated, 1925 : 2,703.

Number of inhabited Houses—(1921) : 786.

Rateable Value—£11,446.

Sum from Penny Rate—£47 13s. 10d.

The whole of the area is approximately 1,000 feet above sea level, and this, combined with the hilly nature of the district, makes it have a trying climate and gives it a heavy rainfall. I have no figures available as to rainfall for the last few years, but for the years 1914-15-16-17 the average rainfall for Alston was 46 inches. In 1914, at Alston, 1,000 feet above sea level, the rainfall was 51.34 inches, and for Nenthead, 1,463 feet above sea level, the fall was 77.19 inches. This will be seen to be considerably higher than the average fall for England and Wales, which was 36.30 inches.

These factors react on the general health of the inhabitants and produce their quota of bronchial troubles.

Goitre is extremely prevalent in the parish. It is chiefly of that type known as parenchymatous goitre, where there is chronic general enlargement of the thyroid gland. The more serious type of exophthalmic goitre is much less common. The causation of this goitre is attributed to the water, the exact manner of its origin being undecided.

The chief occupations are farming and lead mining in this area. Many of the men have a dual occupation—a small farm and work in the mines. Limestone quarries and crow coal pits in the district employ many others, and the coal mines in the neighbouring county find occupation for some.

Some girls are employed at the Laundry and Hosiery Factory in Alston.

There has been some unemployment in the district, but not in the same proportion as in the larger industrial areas. Fortunately, the Nentsbury and Rotherhope mines have maintained the majority of their men, and in the near future it is hoped that they will extend their activities.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS.

			Males.	Females.	Total.
Legitimate	...	...	19	14	33
Illegitimate	...	...	3	1	4
Total	...	...	22	15	37

These figures are equivalent to a birth-rate of 13.68 per 1000. The birth-rate for the whole of England and Wales for the same period was 18.3.

DEATHS.

Males.	Females.	Total.
18	16	34

These figures are equivalent to a death-rate of 12.2 per 1000. This figure corresponds with the death-rate for the whole of England and Wales.

INFANTILE DEATHS.

There was one death amongst infants under 1 year, giving an infantile death-rate of ~~22~~ 29 per 1000 registered births.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Scarlet Fever	...	2
Erysipelas	...	1

Under this heading I wish to point out that 23 certificates of exemption from vaccination were obtained, as against eight successful vaccinations done.

POOR LAW RELIEF.

The total amount of outdoor relief paid to persons chargeable to the Alston-with-Garrigill parish during the year ending December 31st, 1925, was £912 12s. 6d. Nearly the whole of the treatment and advice given and visits paid by the Medical Officer of the Guardians was in respect of patients in the Nenthead Ward.

SUMMARY OF NURSING FACILITIES, HOSPITALS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS, AVAILABLE FOR THE DISTRICT.

Professional Nursing in the Home.

Alston and Nenthead areas each have a trained district nurse, working under the local District Nursing Associations. These two bodies are affiliated to the County Nursing Association. Both local Nursing Associations are to a great extent maintained by voluntary subscription and charitable efforts. The nurses engaged always hold the certificate of the Central Midwives Board.

Midwifery.

The majority of midwifery in the Nenthead area is done by the district nurse. Apart from that the local medical practitioners do most of the rest.

Hospitals provided or subsidised by the Local Authority or the County Council.

- (1). Tuberculosis Sanatoria available for the treatment of local cases are in connection with the County Tuberculosis Scheme. It is to be regretted that the nearest tuberculosis dispensary is at Penrith, as, beyond the fact that it is 19 miles away, it is rather inaccessible except by motor car, and the patients referred there for examination are not always in a position to pay the bill for the car hire.
- (2). **Maternity.** There is no maternity hospital for the area, but maternity cases are accepted at the local Cottage Hospital.
- (3). There is no children's hospital.
- (4). At the beginning of 1925 there was no hospital provision for isolation and treatment of cases of infectious diseases. We relied on the goodwill and generosity of the Committee of the Longtown Isolation Hospital to take and treat such cases for us when necessary, the fees payable being fixed by that body. Before the issue of the next Annual Report I hope this will have been improved so far as Alston is concerned.
- (5). **Smallpox.** The Council share with many other bodies the control and use of the Derwent Joint Board Smallpox Hospital at Whitehaven, distant 60 miles approximately.
- (6). **Other Hospitals.** We have the Alston Cottage Hospital, with two wards and a private room giving 10 beds, and with a properly equipped operating theatre. This hospital is a great boon to the district, although the fact does not seem to be realised by all. In the near future it is hoped that its activities may be extended, although one of its greatest drawbacks is in its lack of free beds. It is maintained by funds obtained from endowments, by voluntary subscriptions, and by fees charged for treatment there.

There is no institutional provision made for unmarried mothers, illegitimate children, and homeless children in the area, except the Poor Law Institution at Brampton, 20 miles distant.

There are no properly equipped ambulances in the district.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

- Maternity and Child Welfare Centre. None in the area.
 Nearest at Penrith, 19 miles away. County Council Scheme.
- Tuberculosis Dispensary. None in the area. Nearest at Penrith. County Council Scheme.
- Veneral Diseases. None in the area. Nearest at Carlisle, 30 miles away.

Public Health Officers of Local Authority.

- Medical Officer of Health—Part time.
 Sanitary Inspector —Part time.

Half the salary in each case is paid by the County Authority.

LEGISLATION IN FORCE.

This information has been supplied to me by the Clerk to the Local Authority, and includes the following orders in force in the area :—

- (1). Dairy, Cowsheds and Milk Shops Order, 1885.
- (2). Urban Powers granted 13th March, 1900, under Section 276 of the Public Health Act, 1875, and under Section 5 of Public Health Amendment Act, 1890 :—
 - Public Health Act, 1875.
 - Sections 39, 42, 44, 45, 155, 157, 158.
 - Public Health Amendment Act, 1890.
 - Section 23. Sub-sections 1, 2, 4.
 - Sections 25, 33, 36, and 38.
- (3). Granted 15th May, 1902, Order investing the Local Authority as to Slaughter Houses with Urban Powers under paragraphs 2 and 3 of Section 169 and 170 of the Public Health Act, 1875.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supplies.

As no annual report has been available for some time, I propose to recapitulate the whole work done in the last five years.

The Alston supply has its source at Springfield, half a mile distant from the town. The capacity of the main tank is 12,000 gallons. It is fed by springs that rise in the limestone formation. In 1924 two new receiving tanks were built near each well, one tank receiving the water from two springs and the other tank from one spring. At the same time the old feeding pipes were replaced by 172 yards of Mannesmann 3 in. pipes on the recommendation of the late Medical Officer of Health. These pipes convey the water from the collecting tanks to the main tank.

The number of houses supplied by Springfield is 320. Since the above work has been carried out no complaint of shortage has been lodged.

The quality of the water naturally exhibits a fairly high degree of temporary hardness; this is because of the fact that it rises in the limestone formation. Any danger of contamination is from surface water.

Nenthead Ward.

The source is an old mine near Hard Edge Farm, situated in the east division of Nenthead Ward. A new tank was built near the source in 1920, the dimensions being 12 feet by 6 feet by 6 feet. This supplies the whole area known as Nenthead.

Formerly Nenthead was supplied from Greengill mine; this included the Nenthead School. Since the autumn of 1920 the

school closets have been flushed automatically from the Hard Edge supply. This has been much more satisfactory.

In 1924-25 the Holmesfoot old pipe track was done away with, a new line being laid of Mannesmann 2 in. pipes, at a cost of £106. Since this track has been in use complaints have been made that the water had a disagreeable, tarry taste. Representations have been made to the Mannesmann Company with regard to this, and the water is to be analysed.

The Hard Edge supply serves the inhabitants except in cases of extreme drought or frost.

Contamination, if any, will probably be at the tank.

It would probably be advisable to extend the Holmesfoot main to Foulard, at an estimated cost of £150.

Garrigill Ward.

The source is at Moss Banks, situated in the western division of the above Ward.

The water is filtered before entering the pipes.

This water is softer than either the Alston or Nenthead supplies, and is probably more satisfactory from a health standpoint.

It supplies the village and school and serves approximately 156 inhabitants. No analysis has been made recently.

The danger of contamination was at the filtering tank from defects in the cover, and also in the conveying of the water from the source to the tank. These defects have been remedied.

Tynehead.

In February, 1921, 883 yards of 1 in. iron screw pipe were laid from Paper Hill to Tynehead School and West Ashgill farms at a cost of £163.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

Alston Ward.

In 1921 120 yards of 12 in. diameter pipe were laid from the lower part of the Main Street to Low Mill. This was to replace a stone conduit. The cost was £199.

In 1925 the Town Foot sewer of 289 yards was laid with manholes and junction pipes. The purpose of this sewer was to serve the houses along Station Road; that is, the section between the Golden Lion Hotel and Low Mill premises. It is intended that this sewer ultimately will take the Hundy and Kate's Lane sewers and replace an old stone conduit running along the Town Foot in front of the houses. The Hundy and Kate's Lane sewers are still to connect to this sewer. The cost up to now has been £289; the approximate cost to complete will be £46.

The whole of the Alston sewerage is discharged through these sewers into the River Nent. There is no septic tank or any other method of dealing with the sewage before it is discharged into the Nent. There is one redeeming feature about the scheme; a small burn from the Fairhill dam keeps a continuous supply of water passing through the sewers in parts.

Nenthead Ward.

There is no proper sewerage disposal scheme here. The principal means of sewage disposal is by stone conduits discharging into the River Nent.

Garrigill Ward.

Until the end of 1925 the village was sewered into stone conduits delivering into the River Tyne. A proper system of sewage disposal has been prepared for this area, the contract let, and the work is now being carried out.

The method of sewage disposal in Alston is not satisfactory, but the question of expense has deterred the Council from carrying out any scheme for improving this portion of the sanitary work. It is also to be hoped that some scheme for Nenthead, similar of that in progress in Garrigill, may be carried out in the next few years.

Another matter requiring attention is the Public Lavatory question. There is no provision of lavatories of any sort for women in Alston, and taking into consideration the number of visitors to Alston in the summer months, this is a matter requiring early consideration.

Excrement Disposal.

FOR PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1925.

No. of Houses		Popula- tion. Approx.	Earth closets	Pail closets	Water closets
420	Alston Ward ...	1,400	40	84	294
220	Nenthead Ward ...	730	86	112	8
156	Garrigill Ward ...	600	46	100	4
796		2,730	172	296	306

Number of Water Closets in 1912—183.

" " " " " 1914—192.

" " " " " 1925—306.

The number of Water Closets in Garrigill will be greatly increased after the sewerage scheme is completed.

Refuse Disposal.

This work is done by contract, the contracts being re-let each year. Two rounds per week are done in Alston and Nenthead and one in Garrigill.

It is highly desirable that the ash carts should be covered and also that ash bins with covers should be provided, at least in Alston.

Otherwise the arrangements are satisfactory, except that in winter, if the snow is excessive in amount, the dustman at Nent-head probably cannot do his two rounds.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

As no full report from the Sanitary Inspector has been before you for some years in the Medical Officer's Report, I propose to give his reports for five years in tabular form:—

	1921.	1922.	1923.	1924.	1925.
No. of inspections of houses, defective drainage and other items of a general character ...	128	144	139	147	109
Nuisances reported ...	20	20	30	46	17
Formal notices ...	13	15	16	16	20
Nuisances abated — result of above notices ...	...	...	...	16	19
Nuisances abated without notice ...	2	4	4	5	...
New buildings erected.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	
Statutory notices ...	Nil.	Nil.	7	3	13
No. of orders complied with ...	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	8
Houses renovated ...	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	2	2
Houses condemned ...	1	6	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Houses closed... ..	1	3	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Houses demolished ...	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Dwelling houses disinfected ...	41	7	8	9	2
Schools disinfected ...	5	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
New water connections	Nil.	3	2	1	1
New water extensions	1	Nil.	Nil.	1	1
New taps	Nil.	Nil.	1	Nil.	2
New baths	1	1	Nil.	5	1
New flush closets ...	Nil.	Nil.	1	2	1
New pail closets ...	1	Nil.	Nil.	2	Nil.
Plans submitted ...	2	4	5	6	5
Plans passed	2	4	3	6	5
Dwelling houses and premises inspected	9	13	10	8	11

There is no necessity for any action of the Local Authority with regard to abatement of nuisance from smoke.

There are no premises or occupations which can be controlled by bye-laws or regulations.

SCHOOLS.

The schools in the area are satisfactory from a sanitary standpoint, with the exception of Nenthall. A detailed report thereon is here interposed.

No. 1.—Large room, 28 feet by $16\frac{1}{2}$ feet by 12 feet. Accommodation, 44; 28 on roll. Four windows, three on north aspect. No ventilators. Ground draughts bad. Heated by open stove.

No. 2.—Cloak room used as class room, leaving no ~~cool~~ room accommodation for children. Two windows, west aspect. No ventilators. Concrete floor. Open fire. *cloak*

Water Supply.—There is no water supply to the school. Water is obtained from Nenthall overflow well at least 200 yards away. This seems to be a very serious defect in a school.

Sanitary Accommodation.—Girls: Three pail closets. Boys: Two pail closets. The position of these near the school and the headmistress's house is objectionable. The position of the ash tip is even more so. The pails, I am informed, are not cleared so often as they ought to be in the interests of the health of the children.

HOUSING.

General Housing Conditions in the Area.

In Alston itself many of the houses are old buildings, and, while there may be many minor sanitary defects, these would be difficult to remedy without wholesale reconstruction of the areas at fault.

In Garrigill the housing as a whole can be considered satisfactory.

In Nenthead area many of the small farm houses leave much to be desired; these again would require rebuilding.

There is no acute shortage of houses in any part of the area, but twenty new houses in Alston would be a valuable acquisition to enable some of the worse property to be evacuated, and either reconstructed or demolished.

There is no gross overcrowding in the area.

The chief characteristics of the houses requiring attention in the area are defective roofing, damp interiors, outside walls in need of pointing and defective drainage. Difficulty is found in remedying these matters, partly owing to the owners being unwilling to carry out repairs and partly to the negligence of tenants.

Since 1920 several houses and premises have been remodelled and rendered fit according to sanitary requirements, but much remains to be done.

There is need for revision of the bye-laws, the last revision being in 1904.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1925.

Number of new houses erected during the year None.

(1). **Unfit Dwelling Houses.**

INSPECTION.

- | | | |
|------|--|----|
| (1). | Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) | 17 |
| (2). | Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 | 17 |
| (3). | Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation | 11 |
| (4). | Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation | 6 |

(2). **Remedy of Defects without Service of Formal Notices.**

- | | | |
|------|--|-----|
| (1). | Number of defective dwelling houses remedied in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers | Nil |
|------|--|-----|

(3). **Action under Statutory Powers.**

(A). Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

- | | | |
|------|---|------|
| (1). | Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs | 5 |
| (2). | Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:— | |
| | (a). By owners | 2 |
| | (b). By Local Authority in default of owners | None |
| (3). | Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close | None |

(B). Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| (1). | Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | 3 |
|------|---|---|

- (2). Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—
- | | | |
|--|--------|------|
| (a). By owners | ... .. | 1 |
| (b). By Local Authority in default of owners | ... .. | None |
- (C). Proceedings under Sections 11, 14, and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.
- | | | |
|---|--------|------|
| (1). Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders | ... .. | Nil. |
| (2). Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made | ... .. | Nil. |
| (3). Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling houses having been rendered fit | ... .. | Nil. |
| (4). Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | ... .. | Nil. |
| (5). Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | ... .. | Nil. |

This information was supplied to me by the Clerk to the Local Authority.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply.

All the milk consumed in the area is produced in the area. Its quality and wholesomeness, as a rule, are satisfactory. The arrangements for its supply and distribution are also adequate. The dairies and cowsheds are inspected at intervals by the Sanitary Inspector, and any defects remedied.

- | | | |
|---|--------|------|
| (1). Action taken as to tuberculous milk and tuberculous cattle | ... .. | None |
| (2). Number of licences granted for sale of milk under special designations—Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1923 | ... .. | None |
| (3). Refusal or revocation of registration or retailers or of licences for graded milk | ... .. | None |

Meat.

The supply of this article of food is satisfactory, and no action has been necessary. The private slaughter houses are managed to the satisfaction of the Sanitary Inspector.

	1920.	January, 1925.	December, 1925.
Slaughter houses registered	... .. 5	... .. 5	... .. 5

There is no further report to make on the question of food supplies, their supervision and distribution.

TUBERCULOSIS.
NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1925.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non- Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non- Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0								
1							1	
5								
10								
15								
20								
25								
35								
45					1			
55								
65 and upwards								
Totals					1		1	

CAUSES OF DEATH IN ALSTON-WITH-GARRIGILL, RURAL
DISTRICT, 1925.

Causes of death.	Male.	Female.
All causes	18	16
1. Enteric Fever		
2. Smallpox		
3. Measles		
4. Scarlet Fever... ..		
5. Whooping Cough		
6. Diphtheria		
7. Influenza	1	...
8. Encephalitis Lethargica		
9. Meningococcal Meningitis		
10. Tuberculosis of respiratory system	1	—
11. Other tuberculous diseases... ..	1	—
12. Cancer, malignant disease	3	8
13. Rheumatic Fever		
14. Diabetes		
15. Cerebral hemorrhage, etc.	—	1
16. Heart Disease	—	2
17. Arterio-sclerosis	1	—
18. Bronchitis	1	—
19. Pneumonia (all forms)	2	—
20. Other respiratory diseases		
21. Ulcer of stomach or duodenum		
22. Diarrhœa, etc. (under 2 years)		
23. Appendicitis and typhilitis... ..		
24. Cirrhosis of liver	—	1
25. Acute and chronic nephritis	2	—
26. Puerperal sepsis		
27. Other accidents and diseases of pregnancy and parturition... ..		
28. Congenital debility and malformation, pre- mature birth	1	—
29. Suicide	1	—
30. Other deaths from violence	1	—
31. Other defined diseases	3	4
32. Causes ill-defined or unknown		
Special Causes (included above) :—		
Polionmyelitis		
Polioencephalitis		
Deaths of Infants } Total	1	—
under 1 year { Illegitimate		

	Male.	Female.
Total Births	22	15
Legitimate	19	14
Illegitimate	3	1
Population	2703	

